21 June saw the arrival on the island of the Irish Justice Minister, Mrs Maire Geoghegan-Quinn. The Minister was here to visit the Irish Civilian Police (Garda Síochána) serving with UNIFCYP.

On Wednesday 22 June, she paid a courtesy call on the Force Commander, Maj Gen Michael Minihan. On arrival at the UNPA, the Minister was met by the Chief of Staff, Brig R Lambe MBE, and inspected a Guard of Honour drawn from the Argentinian Contingent.

After a meeting with the FC, the Minister departed by helicopter for Pyla, where she inspected members of IRCIPOL under Chief Supt Sean Ginty. She then made a short walkabout in the village, during which she met members of both communities.

The Minister was accompanied on her visit by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in Ireland, Mr Patrick Byrne, members of the Irish press and a film crew from the Irish national television station, RTE, as well as the editors of the Ganda News and Garda Review, our two in-house magazines at home.

Minister Geoghegan-Quinn was first elected to the Irish Parliament, the Dail, in 1973 and has been successfully re-elected at all subsequent elections. She holds the unique distinction of being the first woman to have reached the status of Cabinet Minister in the Irish Government since the foundation of the State in 1922. Prior to her appointment to the cabinet in 1979, she held the post of Junior Minister in a number of previous Governments. In this regard, she had special responsibility from 1981-1982 for Youth and Sport. Between 1982 and 1987, whilst in opposition, the Minister was Front Bench spokesperson for women’s affairs, a subject in which she takes great interest as Justice Minister, and since her appointment to the post in January 1983, she has been responsible for a number of changes in police procedures for dealing with domestic violence.

Her hobbies include reading, driving, walking and music. She is also very actively involved in a personal capacity on behalf of her local Cheshire Home.

The Blue Beret is the house journal of the United Nations Force in Cyprus and, as such, is intended to provide a source of information on current events within the Force, on UK matters of general interest and on local tourist advice.

The views expressed are those of the author concerned and do not necessarily conform with official policy.

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Front Cover
We do care!
by Tadeusz Zagoźdżinski

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ARGCON CELEBRATIONS IN UNFICYP
by Father Raúl Perrupato and Capt Hugo Jorge Areco

First and foremost, the spirit of the Argentinean people and its Armed Forces has always been one of friendship and solidarity towards all people of all nations, and its policy has always been to contribute towards welfare, justice and peace.

Argentinian forces is the earnest religious belief that takes its roots from the catholicism of Spain (the “motherland”), which is strongly related to the worship of the Virgin Mary. This profound religious feeling is evident throughout the Army, and is proven by the fact that the two greatest heroes of Argentina’s Independence, Generals José de San Martín and Manuel Belgrano, were both deeply religious men.

On 25 May 1994, the Argentinian National Day was celebrated in Skouriotissa by members of ARGCON and their guests with a military parade and the traditional breakfast, followed by another celebration on 29 May which is Argentina’s Army Day. A pilgrimage in honour of the Virgin Mary was made to all positions in the Buffer Zone which are manned by the Argentinian Contingent.

The week ended with a sporting tournament, which included football, swimming and volleyball, all of which was well attended by all members of ARGCON.

AUSCON REMEMBER A COMRADE

On 2 May 1993, M/Cpl Wolfgang Leeb died in a mining accident. On the first anniversary of this fatal event, members of AUSCON erected a cross at Cape Greco, the spot where the accident took place. On 2 May 1994, Chaplain O Krepper consecrated the cross at a commemoration service.

DEBUT OF THE “GORDON WANDERERS”


Pictured above is the newly formed “Gordon Wanderers” Football Club, which is largely made up of personnel from the UNFICYP Support Services Section. On 24 April 1994, they played and won against “The Accies”, a team from Dhekelia which is made up of teachers from within the Garrison.

AUSCON’S WELFARE OFFICE

“Your wish is my command” is the guiding principle of AUSCON’s Welfare NCO, Sgt Mathias Vatiner. Negotiations with different travel agencies, hunting for lowest fares, booking flights for the AUSCON soldiers and their relatives, rental of videos and arranging recreation tours on the island are just some of the things which are his concern.

Mathies’ leisure time is restricted because there are no limits to his projects. Perfection of those assignments already in progress take a great deal of time. Nevertheless, he always remains calm and collected, welcoming everybody with a smile on his face.
JOINT AUSTRIAN - BRITISH VENTURE

by 1/Lt Berndt Wesak

Thanks to the efforts of our Commanding Officer, Lt Col A Kloss (obviously a sailing enthusiast himself, even if presently disguised as a golf pro), 1/Lt Karl Cunn, L/Cpl Christian Holzknecht and myself, we had the chance to participate in 2 RTR's Adventure Training - a one week's offshore sailing course, based at Akrotiri Mole.

On 2 May at 0745 hrs we met our two skippers, Maj Simon Allen and Capt Paul Macro, together with seven British fellow-seamen down at the Mole. At the start of the course, we were issued with some equipment that we hoped we would not need during the week (such as oil-skis and rubber boats), and were made familiar with the two yachts, the "Strongbow" and the "Flying Frog." A little later we were already sailing, with a nice, south-westerly wind taking us to Larnaca. Even though it was the first time we had approached Larnaca from the sea, we found night life at the seaside the same as usual.

The first night on the boat went well, except possibly for the crew of the "Strongbow," who had to get up several times to convince their boat that she was supposed to stay between the timelines and anchor, instead of making a trip through the marina.

The following morning we were given some instruction on points of sailing etc. and then we did some "man overboard" recovery training. After Skipper P Macro had assessed that two on board the "Flying Frog" were able to get the yacht back to a spot where a man had gone overboard (the skipper himself was not among them), we started our way back towards the Sheraton Marina of Limassol. Running before the wind, we were able to try the spinnaker, and then some rain gave us the chance (unfortunately, see above) to try out the oilies and rubber boots. Finally, a total lull in the wind enabled us to test how a sailing yacht runs under engine.

The last three sailing days were shortened, however, the British and Austrian Medal Parades, but nevertheless, we gained a lot of practical experience in all aspects of yacht sailing.

After approximately 150 nm of offshore sailing throughout the week, the course was finished with the assessment that we were all now "competent crew members," and we hope that our newly achieved knowledge will one day be put to good use.

EXERCISE - AUSCON - EXERCISE - AUSCON - EXERCISE - AUSCON

On Friday 13 May 1994, AUSCON conducted a Recall Exercise, subsequently forming platoons for COP WOODPECKER. All personnel knew nothing about the exercise, many of the Sector Four personnel had left their camps or COPs for various places between Larnaca, Ayia Napa and Bogaz.

At 2300 hrs, the exercise was initiated by the SSO, Maj P Pocher and consequently, each member of AUSCON had to show up at his location of duty within a certain time (four hours for key personnel, six hours for the rest). The line companies were informed by fax, with each company recalling its personnel by telephone or pager, but it was everybody's individual responsibility to ensure his prompt return.

In the camps, personnel were informed of the exercise via loudspeakers, and an immediate falling in of everybody present served to check the actual strength and to pass on the first orders. One after the other, the soldiers returned and the recall system proved efficient once more.

At the beginning of the exercise, everybody had to man his office, prepare dress and kit according to standing orders and acquire special equipment issued etc. Then at 0300 hrs, the second step began and COP WOODPECKER was implemented.

The Battalion formed four reserve platoons, two by HQ Coy and one by each line Coy, during which the daily routine duty had to be continued. At 0300 hrs, a forward HQ was established in Camp Berger, while all reserve platoons were to move to Camp Marie Therese.

There, their equipment was checked and, following some additional specific training, the exercise ended and everybody started on his way back to duty at sunset.

The Blue Beret
The Blue Beret

THE 7TH PARACHUTE REGIMENT ROYAL HORSE ARTILLERY TAKES OVER FROM THE 2ND ROYAL TANK REGIMENT

On Wednesday 1 June 1994, the Advance Party of the 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery arrived in theatre to don their "Blue Berets" and take up the growing role of UN peace-keepers.

The first week consisted of an intense period of handover from the officers and soldiers of the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, and we soon realised that we were indeed fortunate to be inheriting an area from a highly professional and stylish unit. Commanders at all levels continued to remind both OPFORs that the units were not due to change until 7 June, and that the 7th Para RHA "test week" shouldn't start till then. The week continued in the same vein as it had started, and both the Officers' Mess and SNCOs' Mess conducted a most thorough social handover/takeover!

Once we had got over the initial shock of such a temperature change and the surreal atmosphere within some parts of the Buffer Zone, we knew that we had much to look forward to.

The Blue Beret

7TH PARACHUTE REGIMENT ROYAL HORSE ARTILLERY
UP AND RUNNING

by Capt Justin van der Pant

The Regiment has now firmly established itself in Sector Two, with all troops being fully conversant with their areas amidst a busy programme which has seen a high number of visits. These have included those of the FC Maj Gen M F Minehan, the outgoing COS, Brig R M Lambe MBE, his successor, Col J S W Powell OBE and the RC Bishop to the Forces, the Rt Rev Francis J Walmesley CBE, as well as a

as both OPFORs have tested the water in the confines of Nicotia. G Bty celebrated Waterloo Day by way of a BBQ at the LPH swimming pool on Sat 18 Jun 94 with the Battery Commander, Maj Jeff Sims, reciting the history of the Battery since 1815.

On the sporting front, 29 members of 7 Para RHA competed in the Famagusta 10km Race with 6 runners in the top 10, whilst the football team won the Inter-Sector Competition beating ARCON 5-3 in the final.

THE UNIFICYP 10km ROAD RACE

by Capt E O'Hara

The UNIFICYP 10km Road Race was held in the UNPA on 28 April 1994. The race was well supported by military personnel from all over the island. Sector One produced the largest number of runners, and the British Bases were also well represented by Ayios Nikolaos, Dhekelia and RAF Akrotiri.

The winner, in an excellent time, considering the route and weather conditions, was Sgt George Reynolds, RAF Akrotiri, in 34 mins 45 secs. In second place was Sgt Maj Herman Contreas of ARCON, whose speed and endurance capacity belies his age. All competitors, be they serious or fun runners, enjoyed the occasion and fully participated in the event.

The race is on!

The Adjutant, Capt Nick McBryde, exhausted after carrying his kit tray down to the pool.

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**BONDU DOGS — THE FACTS**

by Sgt Peter Conway

We have all heard the expression 'bondu dog', but do we all know just exactly what a 'bondu dog' is? No? Well, a bondu dog (or 'Bondhu Daag', as it should be spelt) is actually a medieval Dutch fertility dance, performed annually in rural Holland at midnight on the third Wednesday in August... only joking!

Bondu dogs are wild dogs which roam and scavenge around the UNPA, sometimes in packs of around five to six, but often individually. They have the appearance of ordinary dogs - because that's what they are! In most cases, they are probably 'ex' pets, now discarded by thoughtless owners. These dogs are DANGEROUS, not because they mauled the estates and savage unsuspecting weary travellers (though I wouldn't trust them as far as I could throw my voice), but because some are diseased - through no fault of their own I admit, but diseased, nevertheless. They carry the illness known as 'Hydatid', which they acquire by eating infected meat. The problem (and I mean problem) with this affliction is that it may be passed on to humans, just by handling, and will cause serious illness which may result in a very permanent case of death!

**ACTION ON CONTACT**

If you come into contact with a bondu dog, what should you do? First of all, wash your hands (or whatever part of the body came into contact), then call for the cavalry on 359666. In this case, the cavalry is the UN MP patrol, and the only white charger they are likely to arrive on is a Pagero called 'UNF 617'. The MPs have a mandate to destroy all bondu dogs and, with a double dose of anaesthetic from 'Dr Buckshot', will eradicate the danger and remove the dog.

A bondu dog's view of an MP in action

These dogs are only as dangerous as we allow them to be. Report all sightings as soon as possible, and with your help, we may even be able to totally remove the threat from the UNPA, once and for all.

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**WATCH OUT FOR THESE MEN - AS THEY WILL WATCH OUT FOR YOU!!!**

by Sgt Peter Conway

In January of 1994, we saw the arrival of the first set of Canadian Military Police personnel since the September 1993 withdrawal of the Canadian Contingent. Three of these members have triumphantly accomplished the next level in the Canadian rank system, and on Monday 16 May 1994, they were promoted from the rank of Corporal to Master Corporal.

This is an important stage in the Canadian Military, as it is the first step towards a supervisory role. Combined, these men have over 24 years of military service and experience, and are well versed in military and criminal law. Good luck in the future and keep up the good work.

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**PERMANENT FORCE RESERVE — THE ARRIVAL OF 7 PARA RHA**

by Captain Neale McArdle

At the time of writing, 7 Para RHA are a month into the tour. The British Contingent are well and truly settled in and the Permanent Force Reserve is once more a smoothly oiled machine, brevitating with efficiency. The hand-over has gone well and we are at a stage now where the OC and Sergeant Major can very nearly pronounce all of the Austrian and Argentinian names!

Among the new arrivals is Lt Gerhard Köstner who has taken over the position of 2IC, Patrols Officer, and even part-time Life Guard at the UNPA pool!

Sgt Maj 'Nobby' Clarke has the job of Perm FR Sergeant Major. As well as his many other duties, he is responsible for ensuring that the leave, adventure training and R&R tie-in and leave us with enough men to do our job. Sgt Maj Clarke's hair was actually black when we arrived here.

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**AUSCIVPOL MEDAL PARADE**

**Wednesday 29 June 1994, a proud day for our "new kids" as they received their UN Cyprus medal for three months' service, presented by Maj Gen M Minehan with a congratulatory speech from HE Mr Eddie Stephens, the Australian High Commissioner to Cyprus.**

Over 60 guests attended the ceremony, many of whom commented on how moving the occasion was with playing of the Australian national anthem ‘Advance Australia Fair’, followed by the unofficial national anthem ‘Waltzing Matilda’.

AUSCIVPOL members and guests enjoyed an afternoon tea with an informal BBQ in the evening. It was pleasing to see that, in spite of the number of UN service medals presented over the years, the special feeling of pride enjoyed by all recipients never seems to diminish.

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

AUSTCIVPOL 40TH CONTINGENT

On 21 March 1994, the 40th Australian Police Contingent arrived in Cyprus for their six-month tour of duty. This is the 30th year that Australian police have been on the island and so far, over 1,000 officers have served here.

We shared the same initial experience as all of our predecessors insofar as learning heaps, understanding little. But towards the middle of June, with the guidance of the 39th Contingent, we were firing on all eight cylinders. As can be seen, the 12 officers have a combined total service of 168 years, and have a range of experience encompassing a wide spectrum of policing skills. As with most contingents, the police officers are all volunteers and undergo a thorough selection process before being employed in Cyprus.

Australian police are being deployed in such diverse locations as Mozambique, Somalia and Cambodia, and it is pleasing that the military and the civilian police are able to work with such close co-operation in UN peace-keeping service.

by Pol Sgt Dave Ayers

SUPT BOB GRAY

Bob is aged 53 and has 32 years’ police experience. He has been a detective for 28 years, working at state, federal and international levels including the Australian War Crimes Commission and internal investigations. At home in Canberra, Bob is attached to the Special Reference Area of the Investigations Department dealing with politically sensitive matters. He is also a graduate in Management Studies from the Australian Police College at Manly. Bob’s hobbies and interests include swimming, golf, music and wine appreciation.

STN SGT BERNIE O’DONNELL

Bernie is aged 31 and has 12 years’ police experience. He is a detective with both community and national exposure, including time spent as a training officer. At home in Canberra, Bernie works within the Special Reference Area of the Investigations Department dealing with matters of a politically sensitive nature. Bernie is studying for a degree in social sciences. His hobbies include diving, photography and hang gliding.

SUPT SANDI PEISLEY

Sandi has 20 years’ police service, from uniform community policing through to national investigations and police internal investigations. Sandi is also the only female in uniform in the Australian Federal Police to hold the rank of Superintendent. At home in Canberra, Sandi is the OIC of a community police station, Tuggeranong District. She has completed a major in adult education and is on her way to a BA in Administration. Sandi’s hobbies include running, reading and she too has a appreciation of fine wines.

STN SGT BRAD JOHNSTON

Brad, an ex-serviceman, is aged 49 and has 23 years’ police experience, ranging from traffic duty through to criminal investigation and legal adjudication. At home in Canberra, Brad is a uniformed community police officer. Brad’s hobbies include antique restoration and Galloway cattle breeding, and he is strongly associated with the Australian Scottish Heraldry Association.

SUPT DAVE AYERS

Dave is 36 years of age and has 16 years’ community and national policing experience in London, England and Australia, including time as a police trainer and fraud investigator. At home in Perth, he is a detective working as a narcotics investigator in the Drug Operations Branch. Dave is studying for a degree in Business Management. His hobbies include tennis, surfing and coaching junior soccer.

SUPT MICK BOLIN

Mick is 28 years of age with nine years’ community policing experience. He has a background of service with the Juvenile Aid Branch and is involved with the Police and Citizens Youth Club. At home in Canberra, Mick is a uniformed community police officer. He is currently studying for a degree in social science. Mick’s hobbies include fishing and mountain-bike riding, and he also has an interest in horticulture.

Peter is aged 28 and has six years’ community policing experience. At home in Canberra, Peter is a uniformed general duties officer. He also performs duty with the Special Operations Team involving major firearm incidents, and often works as a task force officer. His hobbies include tennis, weight training and involvement with a surf lifesaving club. He also has an interest in building.

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STN SGT GRANT SCHULTZ

Grant is 30 years of age with 12 years’ national and community policing experience. Grant is both a search and rescue specialist and a bomb technician. At home in Canberra, Grant is a uniformed community police officer, often attached to the Operation Support Group for crowd control. He is currently studying for a degree in social science. Grant’s hobbies include fishing and mountain-bike riding, and he also has an interest in horticulture.

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STN SGT EDDIE AYERS

Eddie is 38 years of age and has 16 years’ police experience, including time at state and federal levels. Eddie joined the police at the age of 21 and this is his fifth deployment as a senior police officer. Eddie’s hobbies include astronomy, photography and travel.

STN ANIE BROOKS

Annie has eight years’ community and national policing experience. She has a back ground within the general duties branch and is often attached to the Operations Support Group dealing with crowd control. At home in Canberra, Annie works in the Communications Branch. She is currently studying for a degree in Justice Studies. Annie’s hobbies include equestrian sports and triathlons.

STN SGT MICK BOLIN

Mick is 28 years of age with nine years’ community policing experience. He has a background of service with the Juvenile Aid Branch and is involved with the Police and Citizens Youth Club. At home in Canberra, Mick is a uniformed community police officer. He is currently studying for a degree in social science. Mick’s hobbies include cricket, rugby league and rugby union.

STN SGT LYNNE DRAKE

Lynne has eight years’ community policing experience. She has a background of general duties involvement, and is often attached to the Operations Support Group for demonstrations and public order concerns. At home in Canberra, Lynne is attached to the Communications Branch. Lynne’s hobbies include cricket, rugby league and rugby union.

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STN SGT PETER LAMONT

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THREE BUSY MONTHS FOR THE SIGNAL PLATOON

by Capt J Romeira

Since their arrival in Cyprus, the Signal Platoon has been working hard to fix and install HF radio equipment in order to establish a reliable link with stations located at different parts of our extensive area of responsibility, hence enabling ARGCON members to keep in regular contact with their families. Besides providing tactical communications, the Platoon has recently installed a satellite dish so that Sector One personnel can enjoy channels from Spain, Portugal and Italy.

Installing a new antenna at Skouriotissa Camp: Sgt Campos, WO2 Gutierrez and WO2 Rios

Installing the satellite dish at the NCOs’ Mess:

From the left:

Contact with Argentina in the Radio Room

(from the left): Sgt Campos, WO2 Gutierrez and WO2 Rios

ARGENTINA CELEBRATES NAVY DAY

by Lt Hector D Payero

On 17 May, the Argentinian Contingent celebrated “Navy Day”, commemorating the anniversary of the naval combat of Montevideo where the national fleet, commanded by Admiral Guillermo Brown, won its first victory against the more powerful Spanish fleet as part of the campaign to liberate the colony of the Rio de la Plata from the Spanish crown.

The celebration took place at the Box Factory camp, presided over by Sector One’s Commanding Officer, Lt Col J M Durante. Lt Cdr Raul Luna, in an emotional speech, refreshed our memories on the historic events which contributed towards our independence in 1916.

The programme for the day finished with a lunch when the Marines, who are normally busy monitoring the Buffer Zone in the eastern area of Sector One, shared this special day with their Army and Air Force friends in UNFICYP.

Lt Cdr Raul Luna addressing the Marines at Charlie Coy HQ (the Box Factory)

REBUILDING D-26

by Capt Alfredo Mesa Rossi

During a storm at the end of November 1993, the Patrol Base D-26 was almost destroyed while UN personnel were occupying it. UNFICYP authorities immediately decided to rebuild it. The Force Engineer’s office was in charge of the project, and the Argentinian Engineers’ Platoon initiated the task, along with personnel from D-26.


It was a mammoth task with all sorts of expertise required including masonry, electricity, plumbing, etc. However, it was a very useful experience for the Argentinian Engineers working in UNFICYP.

PB D-26, rebuilt after a storm

by Argentinian Engineers
The final round is fired in the UNFICYP Shooting Competition.